

Right, welcome to another episode of the Restless Politics Leading. I'm on my own, well I'm not on my own, but I'm without Rory Stewart because this is what we call an opportunist capture because my guest today, I just heard, was in the hood.

Oh, you're talking about me?

Brian, you can't say you are until I've said who you are.

So I was around and I thought, I don't know what I'll do, I'll get him on for a quick chat.

He's given the game away, welcome Brian Cox.

Sorry, I'm sorry.

That's fine, that's fine.

Brian Cox, that is actor. Did he go on your nerves that there's now this other young whippersnapper?

No, I mean, he's a very nice lad.

Very nice job.

He's very, very nice and we did a garden thing together where we sort of exploded the myth of both of us because everybody thinks I'm a physicist and I'm not.

Who do you think hates Brexit more, him or you, because you both hate Brexit quite a lot?

No, he must as a university man, of course.

I mean, the universities, I know as a former rector of Dundee University, that was the terrible thing about it as all those relationships just went up in smoke.

Now listen, I was sorry to hear about your sister, you've just been back for her funeral and of course, you were essentially raised by your sisters.

I was, you know, I mean, she was always there.

I mean, that was the thing about it. She was like, for me, home and safety, you know, both.

She was a wonderful person, funny, funny, funny, funny and kind of secretive in a way, actually. A lot of people couldn't get her sometimes, but she was, oh, she was solid.

Because your dad died when you were eight and your mom was kind of in and out of institutions.

Yeah, she had, she tried to commit suicide and here is a marvelous letter that she wrote.

She was a good writer, a letter that she wrote about my dad when my dad passed, you know, but I think it was too much for her. She sort of predicted everything that was going to happen and it happened as she predicted and that kind of broke her in a way.

She lost her husband and then he'd given too much away to friends.

This was known as a received occupation because he was a grocer.

So he made about 28 grand, which was a lot of money, but I don't know, he kind of helped these pals go into building. We had years and years trying to get the rights of these buildings that we're supposed to have owned or not and it was all, it was all a mess.

So he just sort of giving stuff away to people?

He was giving stuff away. He was a very generous, I mean, he would go off, he would, he would, you know, he had this shop which was like in this ghetto community of Charles Street, you know, and he had the shop and people came and he gave endless credit. He was,

I mean, I was reading of my book last year and this man aged, and he's eight, he stood up and said, I remember your father, what he did for me when I was a nine-year-old and that was the kind of man he was. He would go off and decorate an old couple's apartment, you know, after he shop shut at 10 o'clock at night. He was that kind of animal and my mother just worried about it and she was right to worry actually. She always used to say just to me, just remember, Brian Charity begins at home and I understood what she meant and it was this balance and of course, when he

died and he got his bank book and he left 10 pound in the bank, that was what it was. Well, I think that broke her like a twig, it snapped her.

A doctor today, what would they define her illnesses?

Oh, I think she had a complete nervous breakdown. I mean, the strain of it and also guilt.

She felt guilty. I mean, there was, she was on at him quite a bit. I think in the end, she had massive guilt because, you know, he died within three weeks of his diagnosis and he was only 51. I mean, he looked a hell of a lot older but that's what he was and it was guilt as much as anything else which really broke her and a lot of other stuff as well and actually interesting. I mean, then she had electric shock treatment which was very primitive and not very nice.

And how important is your Scottishness to you?

Very important. It's become more important to me. It wasn't when I was younger. I mean, I was so ambitious. I wasn't even politically minded. That's all happened to me in latter life that I've become so disgusted with the political state of affairs particularly in, well, the states and yes, he had very much so. So, I didn't have any of that when I was younger because I was plowing

my acting and career furrow, you know, and because I used to think, you know, at the time of the referendum, I kept thinking, why, why doesn't James McEvoy and David Tennant get on board, you know, for the country? And of course, they didn't because they were like, I was all those years ago, you know, pursuing their careers, you know, and it's very difficult being, in a way, I'm doing this film called Glenn Rothen which is about roots and it's very difficult to know when you come from one country and you move to another country. I mean, Tony Hopkins suffered from this greatly. It's, you become rationalized or anglicized. I mean, I'm an anglicizer. I love this country and I've had a great time here but I've always been a stranger and I'm always a sort of non-commissioned officer. This is a thing that I felt very strongly and it's a thing I've loosed and it's sort of a, it's a sort of class thing. It's a feudal thing that they want to put you in your place and it's the thing I hate. I hate about this country.

About Britain or about England.

About the whole thing, you know. I mean, I think we've got less feudal in Scotland. I think the interesting thing is in Scotland and why I'm proud of what's happened and particularly proud of the work that Nicola did, I mean, because she's an astonishing woman, absolutely astonishing, is that we move from a kind of tribalism to a really form of egalitarianism that suddenly we were able to, you know, strike out for what we believe and that was what I came to believe and unfortunately it was my disillusion with the Labour Party because, you know, I was a big Labour man for many, many years and I loved the Labour Party. I believed in it and I still do. I mean, I really still do fundamentally but then it came a choice between Labour and my country and I realised that my country needed something. We needed to do something about it because it's always been the poor relation. When I consider what we gave, you know, what we've given in terms of, you know, invention, Fleming and Penicillin and all the stuff that we've done that the Scots have done and, you know, we get a little bit of tokenism about it. We don't realise what it's come from, from our culture. I'll come back to Labour but you talked about feudalism and yet when Humza Yousaf was sworn in as First Minister, he still had to sort of bow down to King Charles. Don't get me started! Well, I am getting me started. And I remember talking to you before the Queen died and you said the Queen's an amazing woman but once she goes the whole thing goes. Yeah, I should. It's not going to go, is it? Of course it's not going to go. Of course it's not going

to go because they don't want to, they want that. It's so in the DNA of people that that's where they are. They are, you know, you see it. I mean the Northwest and the north of England has been so neglected and is so confused and, you know, when you think of how they all went towards the Tories and now they must be kicking themselves like mad for what they did. Well, I hope they come back for

sure. Well, I think they will come back but what it shows is the insecurity that's there, the deep insecurity and that has to be dealt with. You see, what I'm, what I'm coming around to believe in now Alistair is that really the United Kingdom is just bollocks, total bollocks. And what we should have, I'm sorry, I do feel that. You know, I really do. But I'm all for an independent Scotland and I really am. I believe that we need that freedom. But at the same time, I do worry about England and Wales. I worry about these islands and if you look at it, we are all part of a one. You can't just ignore it. You can't pretend it doesn't exist. And there is a separation. There should be a separation. But it should be on a federal basis. I think what we need is the United Federation. I think we need a separate Scotland, a separate island. We've got to get Ireland together in some way. And I think that's going to happen through just breeding, apart from anything else, and a separate England. Well, actually a separate Wales. And in England, this is a radical thought, should be divided in two. What, east and west or north and south?

What about I had a very radical idea, Brian, of creating a new country called Scotland, where you have London, Scotland, both very, very anti-Brexit, both full of Scots, yes, right, and maybe build a bridge or something. Well, I think I love the, what shall I say, the artistic aspiration. Yeah, you could still live here and look at it. I can look on House DT. Yeah, I know. I mean, I love London, of course. You see, and this is why I've always hoped London

should be a city-state anyway. I mean, because London is where I came to. So, that's perilously close to Singapore on Thames. Oh, well, we don't want that. That's the Brexit vision. We don't want something important to be said. But it's not like the rest of England in London. It's not. It's, I am, you're a wee bit younger than me. I'm quite a bit younger than me. And when I came to London, it was amazing. The time of social mobility was incredible. I left school at 15. I had no educational qualifications whatsoever. I was given a grant. I came here and I studied my craft, and it was the best years of my life. And everybody came and I was welcomed. People were pleased to

see me and people of my ilk and people from my class. We were welcome. Now, there's no pathway. There's none. It's gone. You know, unless you went to the poor schools and they're all making it very realistic. Well, yeah, but that's another pathway. You know, that doesn't help. No, no, that's my point. The arts has become pretty elitist. Yes, exactly. And I think that's not a good thing.

I mean, I can't, I'm not going to knock the Cumberbatches and the Eddie Redmayne's and the Dominic West. I understand that that's a background. And of course, those institutions that were built are amazing. And ironically, they're all ex-actors who teach there. So, I can understand that. But the pathway for the working class, for the poorer classes, it's just non-existent.

You were desperate to be an actor, even as a child, weren't you? Where did that come from, do you think? Well, it came from the sensation I got when I was about three, actually. And my dad used to know, well, you're a part of Scotland. You didn't know about, well, you're mainly Scotland. Well, my blood is a hundred percent, yeah. Yeah, absolutely. So, you understand about Huggman A and New Year and how precious that was and the ritual of it and the first footing and

the guy comes in with the call or the whiskey and greets the house. So, we used to do that every new year, every Huggman A. Our wee flat used to be full of people. In fact, so full of me and my brother who slept in the kitchen alcove, we had to move out. I don't know where my brother went, but I went to my mom and dad's wee bedroom. And my sisters, three of them shared a bedroom. Anyway, so I would go there and they woke me up at one o'clock in the morning and I would come out

and my sister, she would sing and everybody would be very happy. And then I would come and they would

get me to do my turn. And I used to do Al Jolson impersonations when I was three. And I would do that and I would get up there on my, and I didn't even know it was my first stage, but it was my, it was the call bunker, which was in the window recess of our apartment. And I would sing. And I just remember the effect on the room. I thought, how is it that people can come to such harmony? I mean, I didn't know what it was, but there was a sort of, you know, kind of hustle, bustle, noisy and all going on. And suddenly the singing provided this focus. And this, you know, it's like when you go to the theater, I suppose, you know, if you believed in churches, that the ham's the same way. But it's when human beings come together in a kind of, where they're just relaxed and they're open, they're open to something else, they're open to another experience and they, they go into another zone. And I just thought, God, that's, that's precious. And then because I was a showoff, you know, it was just a natural step in because, you know, in my hometown, we had 21 movies. So I had the great inspiration of going to every picture house there was.

We had 21 cinemas in Gandhi. Yeah. How many have you got now?

I mean, three, I think, something like that. Three or four.

And you had theaters?

We had the rep, you know, and we had the palace, the city of varieties. My dad was to take me to the palace to see a comic called Johnny Victory.

You sort of went and bashed in the door and said, I want to be an actor.

I was completely adrift scholastically. I was just, I mean, I did well. I mean,

I've still got my report card somewhere. I did well. But I wasn't happy. I was never happy.

But there was two teachers, a guy called George Hackett, who was my registrar teacher.

And there's a guy called Bill Dure. And Bill was a, and he sang an amateur opera and stuff like that. But he also went to the theater. And he was the first person who he set up a little group

called the Rep Club. It was the Repertory Theater Club, the Rep Club. And we used to go four o'clock to the matinee on a Wednesday. And I only went there like literally three months before I started to work there. And it was, it was, it was great because it was the first time I saw live actors.

I mean, all the actors I'd seen had been of the celluloid variety. And I hadn't really considered the theater at all. And that was the other thing about the sixties was the free cinema.

I got depressed until I saw, I was 14. And I was at the Plaza Cinema in Dundee. And I saw this film called Saturday Night and Sunday Morning. And there was Albert Fenney doing it. And I'm going,

it's possible. I mean, because I felt, oh, I'm not American. I can't do any of that stuff.

Because I wasn't really interested in English movies. I have, you know, I've got taste,

you know, I've gone towards the healing comedies now subsequently. But at that point, no, I was all American stuff. But when I saw Albert, I just thought, this is amazing. This was like a miracle.

This is possible. I can see possibly because we were often mistaken for one another when I was

younger. And I just thought, wow, this is the best. And then eventually I got to work with him. And he was just one of those truly great individuals. We'll come back to politics, but let's just talk about succession for a little while. Were you surprised that just what a big success it's been? Well, it's gone way beyond anything I imagine. I mean, I thought it was going to be a good, I mean, I thought it was a good show. I thought it was, you know, but I didn't know if it was going to go well with the American audience. I didn't think that they're going to get the satire, are going to get the intelligence that's there. I know the British audiences are much more within the thick of it. And sorry. Anyway, we won't go there. And peep show, you know, that Jesse did, and the work that Amanda Nucci has done, you know, which has been really strong and has shifted the paradigm a little bit. You know, Jesse Armstrong used to be a special advisor to a Labour MP called Doug Henderson. You're joking? Yeah. Many, many, many, many years ago. What career choice do you think he made? Do you think he got the right choice in going down the road he went? Do you think he should have stayed as a... No, no. He made absolutely the right choice. He's so gifted. He's got a fantastic team. And it's the way he works with his team. Occasionally, we'll get, we'll get, there's one actor on our show who will start asking questions. And they'll go, oh, fuck, say, stop all that. Just do it. Go on and do it, because the work is great. There's no questions to be asked. It's a gift. You've given a gift on a daily basis. What are you doing? You were meant to be killed off in the first series, wasn't it? Well, no, not really. I mean, that was the thing that my manager told me. But actually, nothing was decided, really. And when I said that, there was a big, whoa, whoa, whoa, no, no, that's not happening. If I was killed off in the first season, that wouldn't have gone into a second season. Yeah, it would have been pretty hard. So I just thought, no, I mean, it is the gift that keeps on giving. But the other stuff is tough. Do you like Logan Roy? I do, actually. I mean, he's the antithesis of everything I believe in politically. But I think he's a very interesting character as how he's come to that state. You know, and I kind of worked it out that he's, his backstory, you know, Jesse drops little markers throughout. He's very good that way. He just drops these little markers. You know, there's one scene where he gets in the pool and his back's all cut, you know, and we reckon that that's probably from an abuse of an uncle in Canada when he went. That was the other thing, because for the first series, there was this, when I was asked to do this show, and I suggested to Jesse, I said, you know, he could be Scots, Logan and Jesse. Oh, no, no, no, he's got to be American. He's got to be American. He has to be American. And Adam McKay, better known as Mackay, I don't know why they, I think it's, I think it's laziness on America's part. Okay, well, Kai? No, let's say Kay. Anyway, Adam McKay, he thought it was a great idea. And Jesse said, no, no, no, he's got to be, he's got to be American. He's got to be American. So I thought, well, okay, I'm American. And then we started the first episode and, you know, you get the script and finally got the script. I mean, I'd already filmed a bit. And I got the script. It was my birthday and I was born in Quebec. And I thought, oh, I'm in Quebec now. And I'm not really doing in Quebec. Oh, well, never mind. I'm doing what I'm doing. So I carried on. And then the ninth episode, the ninth episode, Peter Friedman, what was it? They've changed your birthplace. And I said, what do you mean they've changed my birthplace? I said, yeah, yeah, you're no longer



born in Quebec. I said, well, that has its pluses. I said, so where am I born? He said, oh, I can't remember. He said, no, hang on, let me look. He said, and he got his device. He said, oh, yeah. Yeah. Someone called Dundee Scotland. And I said, that's where I was born. And they said, oh, that's a coincidence. I said, yes, a hell of a fucking coincidence. I said, for nine episodes, I've been playing this guy and suddenly I'm a Dundonian, you know, and then I went to, and these are writers for you. I mean, oh God, writers. Anyway, so you go, I went up to Jesse and I said, so Dundee, yeah, we thought it'd be a little surprise. That's what he said. I said, it's a hell of a fucking surprise. For nine episodes, I'm playing this guy and find it's okay to work. It was good for Dundee though. You went for it. It was great for Dundee. I mean, yeah, we did it all. And that was, and it was a great episode, you know, because Logan's, Logan's dealing with Dundee. Am I dealing? I mean, I had to take people around Dundee to show them

what it was really like rather than what Logan was telling. It was all I, but I do understand Logan. You know, I do, I think he's a very misunderstood character. I mean, if you think about it, all he's trying to do is pick a successor for his horrible business. That's all he's trying to do. He's also trying to be powerful, abuse his power, use his power. Well, he's done that, but he's been doing that. He doesn't try to do that. He's done all his life. All his life. I mean, that's second nature to him because that's who that's what he's become. Does he like his kids? He loves them. That's his problem. Actually, it would be a lot better if he just liked them because liking goes on longer than loving, you know, unless you're in a very loving relationship. But, you know, I mean, no, he loves his children. Oh, Jesse made that very clear to me very early on because I asked that question. I said, does Logan love his children? He said, yes, he loves his children. And that's his Achilles heel is that he loves those kids and it's those kids. And, you know, I've got an episode coming up where I say, you know, I love you, but you're not serious people. Is Shiv his favorite? Shiv was his favorite. And no, no, she's lost credibility because she's a blabbermouth and she's she has no self control, you know, and she's no, she's not really nice. The only one that's really he sees potential and ironically, I think is Roman. I mean, I think that's the interesting thing. He's the least serious, isn't he? He's the least serious, but actually he's not bad at the business side. He's the one that spotted in season two that the Middle Eastern money was fake. He got that in a one hour, you know, Logan clocked that. So he's always seen the potential of Roman, but he's dunted, you know, he's a pottymouth. And what about Connor? Because he was like the hapless wannabe politician, wasn't he? Didn't really have it in him. Well, no, I mean, Connor behaves in a very odd way. And he has done since he was a wee boy. Yeah, I think he's very sweet, Connor. He's a very, he's a very, you know, and also he's very, he's been the ignored member of the family. But clearly, at an early age, it was realized that he couldn't really handle that, the nature of the kind of persistent thing that you have to have in that business. Connor couldn't do it. And is Logan a little bit scared of his wife? I just don't think he can handle relationships at all. I think that's his problem. He doesn't understand intimacy. I mean, I think he's found this young girl, Kerry, who doesn't make the same demands on him to be this or be that or be that or be more, think more of that, which I think has happened to him a lot in his relationships. She accepts him. That's why one of my very favorite scenes is the scene with Colin, my bodyguard. And I say, you're my best pal. But that's sad. I know it's sad, but at least it's honest. You know, and everybody goes, Oh, what is he doing? He's actually saying, look, I think

you're my best pal because you're the only one who's constant in my life, who doesn't ask for anything, who's not trying to get something out of me. Probably thinks you're a complete knob. Yeah, but he may do, but he doesn't express it. He's always grateful. And he's always front and center and everything he does. You know, I mean, it's an interesting kind of dynamic. Oh, yeah. What he thinks. And I just thought it was wonderful of Jesse to write that scene that he's looking who's there and he sits there and he said, you know, you're the best pal you are. It is sad, but it's also, I can understand why he thinks that because there's no, he doesn't, all he wants to be paid and get his, and that's it. There's no hidden motivations there. And he can see that. And the same with Kerry. Kerry is the same. The girls are the same. There's no hidden motivation. And that's why he goes, this person's worth it. This person's considerable, this person's considerable, because he's surrounded by people who are on the make, and it's not healthy. It's not healthy. And it doesn't help him at all. It just deepens him in the mire. And Kendall. Kendall is just so, I don't know, he's a sad, sad creature, Kendall. And he's always trying to prove himself. He's very, he's very needy. You know, he was a needy child, and he's a needy adult. And he's also full of that entitlement. He feels that should all come his way. He feels that's where it all is. And this whole thing about Jeremy Strong and the method acting, is that not just a complete screaming pain in the ass when you're trying to be Brian Cox? Well, have you ever done that? What? Method acting. Oh, fuck, no, no, no, no. Well, let me, let me see. The thing is that Jeremy is a, you know, he's American. There is a thing in the American culture. A wonderful Polish man who was actually Stanislavski's assistant said it brilliantly, Richard Boleslawski. And he said, you know, the problem about America is it's, it's all about the pursuit of the individual. It is not about companies. It is not about community. It's about the individual. It's the individual all costs. Does it literally mean that he goes home and he's still Kendall? No, he doesn't go home and he's still Kendall, but he's Kendall in between everything. And so he's Kendall constantly on the set, you know. And, you know, he was Dan Day-Lewis's assistant. Yeah. So that says a million things about that. Because he was a method. He's a method actor. He's a, they wouldn't describe it as method acting. What did they call it? I don't know. Being in the moment. I wish there was a cover of that one. No, I mean, really, it's just, you know, the best actors are children. They don't research. They don't do anything. They just do it. You know, I do a video, I do a video with a little boy who's called Theo. It's a kind of joke, Brian Cox's masterclass with Theo. And this kid, I teach him to be or not to be. And he gets distracted, but he comes back. And then there's a marvelous moment, which is, he's two and a half. And I say, to be or not to be, to be or not to be, that is the question. He went, ah, I said, that is the question. It is, he said. It's two and a half. It is. And I just thought, what is this coming from? And we don't, we really don't understand ourselves. We, we, we connect with all these stupid belief systems. And we actually forget about who we are and where we are in our state of evolution. But you were talking there about Logan Roy, as if he's a real person and the shifts are real. Yeah, but they're real in a sense of their carapace and what they've come as. But I still light hearted on the set. Who swears more, Brian or Logan? Well, it used to be Logan, but Brian's. Brian Quarters. No, I'm swearing more and more. It's not good. No, I am. I think swearing is good. I think it's very. Well, we know about your swearing. But do you think? Your swearing is quiet. In fact, you were the first. You started the whole thing. I did not. I can't believe you are

responsible for it. What's your favorite form of fuck off? My favorite form is why don't you just fuck the fuck off? Right. You know, fuck the fuck off is why like Brian just fuck off. I don't fuck the fuck off. Has it been fun doing this session? Yeah, it's been great fun. It's really been great. I mean, it's a great show. You know, I've still no idea why it went. It's gone the way it's gone. I mean, it's just unbelievable. It's given you a kind of later life. Absolutely. Explosion, isn't it? Yeah. You know, when I was young, there's something, you know, people much older and wiser

myself would look at me and say, you know, it's going to be the long haul for you, young man. And I thought, oh, yeah, okay. It was fucking true. It was the long haul. It's been amazing. I can't knock it, but I've got so much lined up because I just want to dive in to make sure that I'm still some functioning, you know, rather than sit back on my head. And when you were preparing for it, when you're acting it, is there a kind of known media mogul that you have in your head? No, not Murdoch. No, there's only look. Well, you see the thing about Logan and why he's more interesting is he's self made. Murdoch, well, must certainly come from money. Murdoch had come from, you know, it was a very small. Maxwell was very self made. Yeah, Maxwell was self made.

Yeah, he was. He was self made. You don't think of those guys when you're doing them? No, I don't. No, I don't think of them because he's not them. He's Logan Roy. You know, he's not real. I know he's not real. I know that. I am so aware of that. You know, I didn't just fall off the turnip truck or stuff. You've actually come across any of the Murdochs or that lot. No, the only one I had was Elizabeth's Murdoch's husband. Matthew. Yeah. Oh, the new husband. The new artist. The artist. Nice man. And I was having a latte coffee and he was behind me and he said, well, you know, we're, and he was, he went on to this kind of monologue. And I thought, I didn't realize I was part of the monologue. He said, well, you know, we're, we're finding the show. It's, it's, it's interesting. So hold on. This, this is her husband. Elizabeth Murdoch's new husband. Yeah. And she's the artist. Yeah. And I said, and even my wife is dealing with it. Okay. And I said, Oh, I said, I'm sorry. Who's your wife? He said, Elizabeth Murdoch. And I went, Oh, okay. And they were dealing with it. Like they thought it was all about them. Well, well, they, they, you know, I mean, she, she felt, I mean, he did actually say his parting remark was me and he might have been joking, but his partner might do you think you could be nice or two next season. What do you think of the media both in Britain and in America? God, there's too much opinion and not enough questioning that there's, you know, especially in the American media, even, even CNN, which is prairie liberal, but it's endlessly opinion, opinion, opinion, opinion, opinion. So what happens when you have that and then you have, obviously with Fox, you don't have any debate. There's no debate. The days of Buckley and Cronkite and Buckley and Govedal, you know, those things, you know, that's all gone. That's, and that was, there was a sort of great intellectual American intellectual fervor, which has just been evaporated. And I think that's tragic. But I think we've all gone through such a bad situation in this country. Don't even begin. All right, Brian, we'll take a quick break and come right back. Let's go back to politics. You said that you grew up labor, very, very supportive of labor. My mother was a liberal, actually. My dad was labor. Did you think back then that you'd ever become a nationalist? You never seemed... Not at all.

Where did the change come from?



The change came from Iraq and what happened in Iraq and how there weren't any weapons of mass destruction and you were all led up a certain garden. You know, I know it must be difficult for you because you were all part of that. And that affected me deeply. I just felt, and I felt there was a little bit of hubris flying around. I won't say who, but there was a bit of hubris flying around. And I just thought, you know, this is my mother would say it's not real. You know, that's different. But that's different. I get the intellectual reason of that. But then to say, and therefore I want Scotland to be independent. No, no, no. That's where I was looking for what I felt. I felt that social democracy was not happening anywhere. And the only place that I realized it was happening was in Scotland. And I was shocked because I was shocked at the end. Because I still hate the word nationalized. Because that's my point. You're an internationalist. Yeah, I don't like the word Scottish nationalist party. Well, that's a difficulty that I have. I started doing a lot of reading about the Scottish Enlightenment and all the kind of effects we have and what we did and how we lost our country and I was lost through a lot of the Darien or the whole Darien thing. And I just I realized that we'd kind of fucked it in a way. And we needed to get back to something that we'd lost that we just didn't have. And I felt that there was a social democracy was happening in Scotland and it wasn't happening anywhere else. I mean, Alex Salmon, who is a parliamentarian I admire, but he's been very, I think, foolish over certain things. But Nicola has been extraordinary. She's worn it well and she's shown more than most. You know, I think it was the 2010. There was Leanne Wood, Caroline Lucas, and Nicola and they were all extraordinary. They kind of knocked the guys right off the platform. I mean, I feel that we're in a state where I feel the patriarchy is really dying. Thank God. And we need to move to a more matriarchal society, a society which is much more caring. And that's my feeling. Were you surprised that she went and that she went in the circumstances she did? Well, I think the gender issue was a complete fuck up, really. I mean, I mean, I believe that it has to be attended to. So I admire the country for attending to it. But I think they got them. It was the wrong thing. I mean, I just think there was needed more consideration and thought into into that, you know, very tricky subject. Well, and I believe in the subject, but I just felt that we didn't they didn't handle it. And I just think that I think Nicola was really under siege. And I just think she felt, you know, because people used to say the most awful things about her. I mean, the abuse that she got was unbelievable and unwarranted. I completely unwarranted it as far as I was concerned. So I and then people kept visiting motives on it, which clearly are not there. You know, she's a good woman. She's a really good woman. So I was just, I just thought I could understand why she decided that she wanted to get out. And when the Supreme Court stopped us from going for that second referendum, I think that was such a hit knock in the face in a way. And I think that she, you know, she struggled on with it a bit, but she maybe felt that it needed a new energy to really take it on to the next stage. Do you not worry that you see, you've had summons move the dial a bit, she's moved the dial, but actually now on independence, the dial has probably gone backwards. Yes. And that's what I'm worried about. That's why I don't think we we I think we've got to keep it up. We really have to. I mean, there's a lot of problems with child poverty and child care and all of that, they are attending to you. I mean, they need to attend to what the people's needs are. But we do need to be free. And I still think so. I particularly now, I mean, I know, you know, I know governments come and go, but this is this last government. And it's ironic because it's 13 years in the same way they used to say in the 16th, 13 years of Tory misrule. And now we've had

not even misrule would be a flattery, you know, really. I think we've just had the most awful thing and the awful set of values. Obviously, I agree with that bit. But the other thing is that if Scotland stays with the SNP without independence, okay, then that minimizes the chance of Labour

getting rid of the Tories. And is there nothing that Labour can do to get you back? Well, no, because Labour don't I mean, because Keir Starmer has absolutely said he's against Scottish independence. And I'm for Scottish independence. I mean, there comes a choice you have to make, Alistair, you know, you can you can go down that road, you can go down that road. But I find it and it's not an easy road. I tell you, it's not an easy road because, you know, Scottish National Party is a very broad church. I mean, I'm just seeing regular fuck ups on a regular basis. So and I think maybe it will be helped. That's why I believe in the United Federation. I don't believe in the United Kingdom, because it isn't a United Kingdom and never has been the United Kingdom. That's the hypocrisy of it. You know, we've always had to depend on handouts, you know, and we're told we're told of what's what are they called, the name of the money that we get from the bar, you know, and we're told, oh, you do very well on the Barnett for me. You know, you're doing big, you should why do you complain? You go, well, I don't want to be there, you know, just getting holding my plate up for a few crumbs that come my way. You know, I want to be ourselves.

That's it. And do you know, I think some of the criticisms of the SMP record on public services are justified, though. Well, of course, there is fluctuations. There's no question about it. You know, I mean, this is what I feel too. Once we have an independent Scotland, there will be a Labour Party. There will be a Conservative Party. There will be all of those elements there. I mean, for Christ's sake, the Labour Party started in Scotland with Keir Hardy and all the stuff that they did. So I am dedicated to the Labour in that sense. I'd love to see Labour come back in a free Scotland. At the moment, if they're not prepared to give themselves to a free Scotland, Keir really isn't, he doesn't want to do that. He's not interested in that. And that will always provide a conflict. So how well do you think Labour's going to do at the election in Scotland? Oh, they're going to do, well, they might do really quite well. We've got to get our shit together, but they might do quite well. And Brexit. Well, that's the other thing. That's the big deciding factor about going on with independence, because 62% of us voted to stay. We wanted to stay. We didn't want to leave. We want to get back there. And that's where we are international. The Scots have always been international. It should be called the Scottish Independent Party. It should not be called the Scottish National Party. I would change the name. I would get rid of that name, because it narrows everything. It narrows everything. And especially when we think of national socialism, all the horrible things that go with the name national. So I'm all for really redesigning the party in that way. But, you know, I think we have to stick with that. Now, you're getting on a bit now, Brian. Oh, come on. So tell us the next bit. When the succession finishes now, soonish, you're done with it. And then you've presumably got to go around the world talking about it a bit. And then you're going to do what? What am I doing? Well, I'm going to try and direct this film in Scotland, called Glenn Rothen, which is about... Are you in it? I am going to be in it. But I'm having great difficulty casting my leading actor at the moment. Partly because of the pressures that are on films. I mean, I think they're under an old illusion, you know, because I don't think that makes the same sense because of the streaming service, because there's so much way that you can actually present a film now. It's not... I think the whole

paradigm has shifted in that way. So I actually think that this film is a lovely film. It's about a family distillery and about two brothers of a certain age. One is about sort of 10 years between them. And the older brother is the dull one, which is the one I'm playing in. He's managed the firm for the distillery. The younger brother left and he was the master... He was the youngest master distiller. He was the talented one, but he left at an early age, ended up in Chicago, ended up becoming a writer of blues. He wrote... He was a journalist in music. His world is imploded. And his brother, my character, has written him a note saying, I would like you to come back because we need to sort out the family business. And because I've had enough, I don't particularly want to go on anymore. And he's also not well. So the younger brother doesn't want to go and he ignores the letters. And his daughters have virtually kidnapped him, takes him to Scotland, and then it all starts to happen. And why can't you find the guy to do it?

Well, I know who I want to do it, you know, but I mean, they kept saying, oh, he doesn't bring anything to the box office. I mean, this is... And I'm going, you know, apart from Bert Lancaster, local hero didn't have anybody well known at all. And there was a film that made a lot of money. I know there's a film with James McAvoy that's made about 11 million. I've got a producer who does with that, deals with that. And he's dealing with it every day. And my heart goes out to him because it's tough. But I'm just... Who do they want then? Well, they don't know. Tom Cruise. Yeah. Or, you know, they would have come up with, no, they don't know. That's, they don't know. Can you find David Tennant? Have a bit and put a bit away and a bit of age on.

Yeah, I could find David, but there are other people as well. I mean, David is a bit too young. I've got to have somebody who looks as if they've been battered a bit, you know, and there are a few actors who I can't name. Yeah. Well, I could give her a go. I'll play the pipes. Well, if you, Alistair, if you were an actor, you would actually... You could teach me. You could teach me.

Well, I never thought of that. Neal Zagan, if you're listening, what about Alistair Campbell? Think about it. I have had a very minor role in a Jimmy McGovern play once. Did you really? I was, sadly, I was playing myself though. Oh, yes.

I didn't really count. That's an awful thing to say. Sadly, I was playing myself.

Brian, thanks for having me. As ever. You're welcome.

Hi, I'm Yves, and I'll be honest with you, guys. The hype around chess is real.

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